

An Analysis of the Development of Nationalism in Sichuan and Chongqing since Modern Times (1911-1949)—Investigation and Research Based on *North China Daily News*

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Abstract: As the most influential newspaper in modern times, *North China Daily News*, with its rich historical value, provides a reference platform for contemporary people to study modern nationalism. As the stage center of modern history, this paper explores the detailed and authentic reports on nationalism in Sichuan and Chongqing in the *North China Daily News*, explores the development of nationalism in Sichuan and Chongqing since modern times, and provides research convenience for scholars.

Key words: *North China Daily News*, *North China Herald*, Chuanyu Nationalism

As the most influential newspaper in modern times, *North China Daily News* provides a new historical perspective for us to understand nationalism, that is, to study the development of nationalism in Sichuan and Chongqing based on *North China Daily News*. This paper will explore the changes and development of nationalism among the people of Sichuan and Chongqing in recent times through four aspects: politics, economy, culture, and education.

1.The social and cultural environment of Sichuan and Chongqing in modern times (1911-1949):

In 1912, Shizeng Li, Yuzhang Wu, Zhihui Wu, and others initiated the organization of the Frugality Society for Studying in France in Beijing to organize students to study frugality in France. The general agency for cultural and educational exchanges between China and France. In June 1915, with the support of Yuanpei Cai, Yuzhang Wu, and others, Shizeng Li, Guang'an Li, Xiubo Zhang, Yunqing Qi, and other Chinese workers in Paris, France, organized the French Society for Work and Frugality in France. The purpose of the association is to “work diligently, study frugally, and improve the intelligence of workers”. The term “work-study” began here.

In 1918, the Sichuan Branch of the Chinese French Education Association and the Sichuan Branch of the Work-study Society in France were established in Chengdu. The Sichuan Branch of the Chinese French Education Association has translated and published books and newspapers in Chinese and French, introduced Chinese students to study in France, organized Chinese worker education in France, contacted Chinese and French scholars and academic groups, and helped the French study in China. Activities such as translation workshops, night schools for Chinese workers, and the Chinese worker club department have greatly promoted cultural and educational exchanges between China and France.

The significance of the above historical events, as well as the establishment of various literary institutions, research institutes, and reading societies, have promoted the in-depth and extensive development of the literary revolution, ushered in the era of Chinese literature, and ushered in a new stage in the development of Chinese science and education.

2.Overview of *North China Daily News* and *North China Herald* :

In 1840, the Opium War opened the door of the country, and the number of foreign residents increased day by day. There have been many newspapers and periodicals in the cities where they live, among which the weekly *North China Daily News*, founded by British businessman Henry Xi'amen in the British Concession of Shanghai on August 1850, is known as the “First Foreign Language Newspaper in China”.

At the beginning of its establishment, *North China Daily News* focused on publishing commercial materials such as advertisements, commercial quotations, and shipping dates. Strictly speaking, most of the news it published did not yet have standard forms. Its message generally does not have a lead, nor does it choose an angle, with the purpose of simply transmitting information. This situation also reflected, from one aspect, the editorial policy and limited level of business development of foreign language newspapers in China at that

time, and its gradual change was after a large number of Western professional journalists emerged and entered China.

The *North China Daily* is rich in content and comprehensive in information. It attaches great importance to speech and current affairs, and often expresses opinions on Sino foreign relations, China's political situation and major domestic events. It involves reports of many important historical events, especially the Westernization Movement, the Anti Japanese War and other events.

3.The people of Sichuan and Chongqing in *North China Daily News* and *North China Herald*

Since the beginning of the new century, with the integration and compilation of historical materials in the newspapers and periodicals of *North China Daily News* and the acceleration of the digital engineering process, and under the influence of continuously advancing new research methods and research perspectives, its related research has gradually begun to transcend the limitations of diachronic individual case studies and historical material statements, presenting a more distinctive theme, more specific content, and more diverse perspectives.

As late as 1861, the *North China Daily News* began to publish statistics on readers' letters. In 1919, when the Paris Peace Conference was held and the May 4th Movement took place, 19 letters from 13 Chinese readers were published in the New York Times. From 1930 to 1939, the number of publications reached a total of 651. The data obtained by inputting the word *Daily News* through the national newspaper index engine are as follows.

Chinese scholars have done little research on the external manifestations of nationalism in the *North China Daily News*, so it is currently in the initial stage, and there are still many limitations and flaws in the research. Due to the difficult textual research of historical documents at that time, there is still a need for a large number of scholars to study and explore to standardize its content and standards.

3.1 Political level: further establishment of ideology and political position

The political impact of *North China Daily News* on the Sichuan Chongqing region reflected the political situation at that time. According to the debate between *North China Daily News* and Hongming Gu during the road protection movement. The statements of *North China Daily News* always stand on the position of foreign forces of aggression against China, and they are opposed to the anti imperialist and anti feudal struggle of the Chinese people, which has aroused the resistance of the people of Sichuan and Chongqing. Based on the relevant records of the Sichuan Road Protection Movement.

Regarding the road protection movement in Sichuan, the "Letter from the Editor of *North China Daily News* on China's Railway Issues" was published in the "Reader's Letter" column of *North China Herald*, on October 7th, Hongming Gu believes that "the key issue in the debate between the people of Sichuan Province and the central government of Beijing is not the policy issue of nationalizing railways or increasing foreign loans, but rather the issue of China's reform. That is, whether the reform of introducing foreign methods should be decided, implemented, and monopolized by a minority protected by the regent or other authorities, or whether it should be implemented with the complete and free unanimous consent of the entire nation."

The road protection movement carried out by the people of Sichuan dealt a heavy blow to the rule of the Qing Dynasty and imperialism in China, greatly encouraged the fighting spirit of the bourgeois revolutionary party, directly led to the overall outbreak of the 1911 Revolution, and made immortal contributions to the Chinese bourgeois democratic revolution.

3.2 Economic aspect: continuous improvement and development of means of production and living

Since modern times, the development of traditional commercial routes in Sichuan and Chongqing has continued. To expand the market, there are no transportation problems. With the help of Yangtze River waterway transportation, goods from Wuhan can reach Chongqing upstream and further penetrate the hinterland of Sichuan and Guizhou and Yunnan regions.

First of all, the cotton textile industry in Wuhan is no stranger to this region. In the late Qing Dynasty, cotton textile products transported from coastal areas to Wuhan were "re exported with various colors of cotton cloth and various cotton yarns from home and abroad... all prospered, with Sichuan as the most popular market for cotton yarn.". During this period, not only foreign and coastal cotton yarns were sold to Sichuan, but the Hubei Yarn Bureau founded by Zhidong Zhang also had contacts with the Sichuan market. It can be seen that the economy of Sichuan and Chongqing has greatly improved, and the means of production and living have continuously developed.

3.3 Education: New progress in educational methods and content

According to statistics, in 1930, there were 341 public and private registered schools in Shanghai, 303 in the Chinese border, and only 38 in the concession. There were 564 unregistered schools in the Chinese border, 191 in the concession, and 373 in the concession. The concession schools accounted for 45.5% of the total number of schools in the city, while only 9.3% of the schools registered in the concession. During this period, the educational sovereignty of the concession was oppressed by the concession education.

In 1931, the National Chengdu University, the National Chengdu Normal University, and the Public Sichuan University were merged into the National Sichuan University, making them one of the first 13 national universities in China at that time, and ranking among the top in terms of educational scale. Since then, new progress has been made in the content and methods of education in Sichuan and Chongqing. According to the report of *North China Daily News*, professors from various countries have come to visit and begin their teaching journey.

Epilogue

Modern Chinese people wrote in English and expressed their nationalist sentiments and aspirations directly to the international community through mainstream media in various countries. This article launches an interpretation of the external expression of nationalism, focusing on the political aspects of Sichuan and Chongqing: further establishment of ideology and political positions; Economic aspect: continuous improvement and development of production and living materials; Education: New progress has been made in educational methods and content; Cultural aspect: The high patriotic sentiments and cultural literacy of the people of Sichuan and Chongqing. The period recorded in *North China Daily News* is undoubtedly extremely valuable historical data.

Newspaper materials give researchers a sense of three-dimensional echo, enabling them not only to have rich historical data to cite, but also to have an intuitive experience of the music life in Shanghai after the opening of the port. Similarly, it is undoubtedly a scientific research method to reconstruct the true expression of nationalism in Sichuan and Chongqing regions using the reports in *North China Daily News*. The timeliness and authenticity of newspapers make facts as close to reality as possible, reflecting social life, and providing more intuitive data for studying the external expression of nationalism in Sichuan and Chongqing.

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